

its search for les grandes lois', is after all a lesson of the vanity, for the artist, of trying to encroach as an amateur on science. The answer to so many of Proust's general problems is to be found not in Proust, but in Freud. The qualities that make this novel good remain the same as have made older novels good—its powers of dramatic episode and description, its character-drawing, its poetry, its personality, its style. It is not a new philosophic revelation. It remains fiction, though it annexes the interest and the charm of other literary forms as well—of autobiography in the style of Montaigne and Rousseau, of *pensees* like those of La Rochefoucauld and La Bruyere, of prose-poetry like Chateaubriand's. Surely this is enough. Need we also acclaim Proust as a philosopher?

Of the form, again, and the construction of this novel we hear as much as of its philosophy—too much. No doubt the author very ingeniously explains at the end how to Swann, who is a prototype of Marcel himself, all the chains of causation which controlled Marcel's destiny • ultimately lead back. But one may prefer forms of construction whose excellence does not need explaining.

Proust's whole work, like many of his single sentences, seems to me in danger of bursting from all he tries to pack into it. It tripled its length between 1913 and his death, nine years later. It was unfinished because he died;

it might have remained so, if he had lived.

Far more outstanding than the construction of the whole is the brilliance of episodes, like Sarm's love for Odette, or his interview when under sentence of death from his doctor with the Due and Duchesse de Guermantes, or Marcel's nocturnal scene with M. de Charlus when he tears that tyrant's hat to shreds, or his other nocturnal talk with Albertine, which is meant to cut the knot between them for ever and instead leaves him